

NORTHERN VIRGINIA MENTAL HEALTH INSTITUTE

Clinical Psychology Externship Program

Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute (NVMHI) is an accredited, 123-bed, psychiatric facility with a mission to "provide safe, quality inpatient treatment to support the recovery of individuals with serious mental illness so that they may achieve more satisfying and productive lives." Located in Falls Church, Virginia, the Institute provides services to the communities of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William Counties, and the cities of Alexandria and Fairfax.

With a vision "to create an environment of hope and possibility that inspires service excellence" NVMHI has assembled a multidisciplinary and culturally diverse clinical and administrative staff that provides a wide range of services. The staff is composed of psychologists, psychiatrists, physicians, social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, expressive therapists, recreational therapists, education and nutrition specialists, and psychiatric technicians.

NVMHI has adopted a recovery approach to treatment. In collaboration with the patient, the treatment team formulates a comprehensive assessment of the patient's needs, identifies treatment goals, and constructs individualized, strength-based strategies to achieve those goals. The treatment team is headed by a psychiatrist and its core members include a psychologist, social worker, nurse, occupational therapist, recreational therapist, and community service board representative, who serves as the patient's liaison to outreach services.

The Psychology Department at Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute provides a full range of services to individuals who suffer from acute, as well as, severe and persistent mental illness. Our services include assessment (risk, forensic, substance abuse, and behavioral), group and individual psychotherapy, treatment planning, behavioral consultation and intervention, and training. The department has 10 doctoral-level psychology positions (Psychology Director, Forensic Coordinator, and 8 psychologists assigned to treatment teams), and an Administrative Assistant. The department has an integral role in achieving the Institute's mission of "actively promoting the recovery of individuals with serious mental illness through the use of safe, efficient, and effective services." As psychologists, we seek to fulfill our role to the Institute and to the profession by promoting quality care and providing quality training for future psychologists.

Overview of the Externship Program

The externship program provides broad-based training of psychology doctoral students from universities in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. During the academic year of September through May students participate in 16 hours of training per week. The students work closely with an assigned, clinical psychologist and develop their skills in assessment, treatment planning and case conceptualization, and both individual and group psychotherapy. Under the purview

and guidance of the Psychology Department, the assigned, supervisory psychologist will have primary responsibility for the student's training.

The initial weeks of the externship is designed to allow the extern to complete employee orientation, become familiar with the facility, applicable policies and operating procedures, and develop a list of training objectives with their supervisor.

During the academic year, externs will work with one or more of the treatment teams and participate in patient rounds, treatment planning, and strategy meetings. Externs will complete psychological assessments, engage several patients in individual psychotherapy, co-lead group therapy with a staff psychologist (with the chance to develop and facilitate a group on their own), attend Grand Rounds, and participate in other training opportunities as available. In keeping with the Institute's interdisciplinary team approach, the department will seek to engage members of other disciplines in the training process.

Externs will spend two, 8-hour days at the Institute; one of them will be Wednesday and the other day will be decided by the student in consultation with his/her supervisor.

Two externship positions are available, with one student working on the Forensic Unit and the other working on both the acute and intermediate civil units.

Facilities and Resources

The Psychology Department maintains a student office to be shared among the externs. Students may use this office to complete work projects and secure personal items. The office's equipment includes a computer with e-mail, a telephone with voicemail, office supplies, and furniture. Students will be issued an employee identification badge, parking permit, and necessary keys. A mailbox will be assigned and shared by all externs.

Training Co-Coordinator:

A training coordinator will be responsible for oversight of the training program and will

- Serve as liaison to the universities' training directors.
- Ensure that a current program description is available to each university training program.
- Serve as point of contact for applicants.
- Maintain appropriate training program documentation.
- Organize the reviewing of applications as well as the selection process.
- Ensure that all parties sign applicable agreements prior to the onset of the extern's training.
- Coordinate student's access to mandatory training; e.g., hospital orientation and TOVA training (Therapeutic Options of Virginia: a systematic training program designed to help prevent, de-escalate, and manage problematic behaviors, and reduce the potential for verbal and physical abuse).
- Serve as the initial point of contact in the grievance process.

Psychology Supervision

Psychology supervisors agree to provide supervision for the entire academic year. The psychology externs will receive:

- One hour of weekly supervision for their individual psychotherapy.
- Weekly supervision concerning their group work.
- Weekly supervision regarding their unit work.
- Weekly supervision regarding their psychological assessments.

Applicants

The training program is designed for students who are seeking a broad-based, inpatient training experience with mentally ill adults, aged 18-64. Students with an interest in serious mental illness, assessment, psychotherapy, forensics, and acute care are encouraged to apply. Participation is extended to doctoral students enrolled in psychology programs at universities in Virginia, Maryland and Washington D.C. Students who have completed two years of study are preferred; however, consideration will be given to those students who have clinical experience but less than two years of academic training.

Application Process

Applicants should submit the following documents:

- A letter of interest
- A resume or vitae, to include graduate courses taken
- One letter of recommendation from a professor/supervisor

Applications should be sent to:

Maia McKinney, Ph.D. and/or Leslie Murray, Psy.D.
Psychology Training Co-Coordination
Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute
3302 Gallows Road
Falls Church, VA 22042-3398

For questions, please contact the co-coordinators:

Dr. McKinney: Maia.mckinney@dbhds.virginia.gov or (703) 207-7414

Dr. Murray: leslie.murray@dbhds.virginia.gov or (703)645-3118

The training program will follow the guidelines set by the Consortium of Clinical and Counseling Psychology Programs. NVMHI will accept applications from students until January 31, 2014. Applications will be reviewed and the selection of applicants to be interviewed will be decided by February 7, 2014, with one of the training co-coordinators contacting those selected to be interviewed. All interviews will be scheduled and completed between February 17, 2014 and February 28, 2014. The applicants will be ranked and on call day (Friday, March 14, 2014), the notification of applicants will begin.